

Americans for Tax Reform, Eli Lehrer and the R Street Institute, Pat Nolan, former president of the Justice Fellowship, Marc Levin of the Texas Public Policy Institute, and Freedom Works.

It is supported by law enforcement leaders, including the Major Cities Chiefs Association and the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, which represents many of the largest district attorney's offices in the country—big cities. They represent county, Federal, State, and local prosecutors—prosecutors at every level.

The bill is supported by the Council of Prison Locals, which represents more than 28,000 correctional workers in the Federal Bureau of Prisons. The bill is also supported by crime victims themselves, including the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence, a coalition of more than 1,000 different organizations that advocate on behalf of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. As they explain, mandatory minimum drug sentences are draining the resources needed for victims. Women who are victims of domestic violence sometimes end up serving long sentences that the Congress intended for kingpins and other drug organization leaders. All of that unity in this country supports this act.

I wonder, is there anything else Senator LEE would like to say about this bipartisan, widely supported by both the data and the advocates across the quantum spectrum—is there anything else the Senator would like to add?

Mr. LEE. Yes, and I would like to conclude my remarks in a moment by wrapping up. Before I do that, though, I notice on the floor with us is my friend Senator WHITEHOUSE, who happens to be another supporter and cosponsor of this bill and who is also the ranking member on the Senate Judiciary Committee, and I would ask Senator WHITEHOUSE to say a few words about this bill.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Thank you, Senator LEE. I am glad to be a part of this conversation. I share the concern that we all have for a Federal prison system that is 30 percent over capacity and costs \$6 billion a year already. We have to add, if we are going to take care of the 30 percent over capacity—that is \$6 billion under the present circumstances, and that \$6 billion comes out of law enforcement budgets and community support budgets that could be making our streets safer.

At the beginning of every sentence, a judge imposes the duration of the sentence, and at the end of every sentence, a prisoner makes a decision about how he or she is going to engage with the public upon their release. There is a bill that deals with the latter part, helping prisoners make better decisions and be better prepared to reengage with the public once they are released. I hope very much the bill Senator CORNYN and I are leading in the Senate Judiciary Committee can, as this moves forward, be connected be-

cause the two are linked thematically, and it makes a big difference.

The reason we care about how people at the end get back into regular society is because if they reoffend they go back to prison again and add to the prison population and add to the costs. If they are in longer than they should be, then we are not getting any public safety benefit out of all of this.

So I look very forward to working with all my colleagues to try to see if we can get together in the Senate a comprehensive piece of sentencing reform legislation. Having been a prosecutor myself, having used mandatory minimums, I appreciate that they can, in certain circumstances, have value, but I think if one looks at the big picture, this sentencing reform legislation is important and will serve the public interest in a great variety of respects, including safer communities. So that is why I am cosponsoring it and that is why I am an ardent supporter of it.

In closing, let me thank Senator DURBIN and Senator LEE for their leadership as the lead coauthors of this legislation and Senator FLAKE and Senator BOOKER for their efforts on behalf of this as fellow cosponsors.

Mr. LEE. I thank Senator WHITEHOUSE.

Mr. President, I would like to conclude by thanking my colleagues for their help. First of all, thanks to Senator DURBIN for working with this Senator over the last couple of years in developing this legislation. I thank my other cosponsors as well. I thank Senator BOOKER, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and Senator FLAKE, who have joined us today.

This is truly a bipartisan, bicameral effort that brings support from across the political spectrum. Excessive mandatory minimums do not make us safer. The last 30 years have shown us that they are applied unevenly and they leave a gaping hole in the communities they impact most heavily. Now we as a society have to pick up the tab. We must decide if we will continue to pay the high fiscal and social costs that mandatory minimums impose. It is important for us to remember these costs do have many manifestations.

Sometimes in this body we focus only on the fiscal pricetag that can be expressed in raw numbers, but doing that allows us to ignore too often the high human costs—the families and the communities that have lost brothers, sons, fathers, uncles, and nephews, people who could be back in their communities contributing meaningfully to their success, who are instead sent away for sometimes far too long of a prison sentence. We can continue down this current path or if we could try something smarter, that perhaps would be better.

The Smarter Sentencing Act gives us an opportunity to do precisely that—to do something smarter, to rely less on prison, and to do more with scarce resources. Instead of just paying for prisons, it would allow us to work smarter in pursuit of justice.

I hope all my colleagues will join us in supporting the Smarter Sentencing Act.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, to change the subject from sentencing reform to climate change, I come to the floor today for the 93rd consecutive week that the Senate has been in session to urge that my colleagues wake up to the urgent threat of what results from our levels of carbon pollution. It is an opportune time now to consider a step-up in American corporate responsibility on climate change. Call it corporate climate responsibility 2.0.

Americans can celebrate and applaud the fact that America's corporate leaders have taken so many important steps on climate change. Companies such as Walmart and Coca-Cola, to pick just two, see the problem clearly and have done great things. Walmart, for instance, has taken exemplary responsibility for its carbon footprint not only within its facilities but out beyond its corporate walls into its international supply chain. Walmart has led the move for consumers away from incandescent bulbs and into high-efficiency lighting. If you have ever used that machine where you have to crank electricity in order to light up an incandescent bulb and then do the same thing for a high efficiency bulb, you have an unforgettable experience of how much more efficient those modern bulbs are. Walmart has strong and responsible carbon policies and Walmart has made a successful business model of saving money by reducing carbon emissions. Walmart even has an internal price on carbon so it can properly evaluate its internal processes in its own facilities against its climate standards.

This is not new for Walmart. A decade ago, Walmart's then-CEO Lee Scott said:

The science is in, and it is overwhelming. We believe every company has a responsibility to reduce greenhouse gases as quickly as it can.

Coca-Cola, the other company I mentioned, has exemplary carbon policies too. Coca-Cola knows how disruptive climate change can be on the water supply that is Coca-Cola's most basic need in its bottling facilities. They, too, have found the sweet spot of saving money by reducing their carbon output.

As the Arctic melts, Coca-Cola even put a polar bear on its iconic Coke can. Muhtar Kent, Coca-Cola's CEO, has said:

It is absolutely imperative that our commitment to a low-carbon future be fully understood. We're here to lend a Coca-Cola voice to the public and political debate on getting to a fair framework, an inclusive framework, and an effective framework so that we can achieve climate protection.

Many other major corporations have too. There is Google and Apple, apparel giant VF Corporation and Nike, Mars, Nestle, and Cargill, General Motors and the Ford Motor Company, UPS and Federal Express, Unilever and Starbucks. All are in different ways clear-eyed and responsible climate champions.

So there is a lot to celebrate from America's corporate leaders, but there is also more to be done. We are right now at a societal and political tipping point on climate change, where corporations that are already good on climate change—corporations that are sensible and responsible on climate change—can make a big difference by taking it up one more step and putting their politics where their policies already are.

So what is putting your politics where your policies are? First, it is making climate change an issue, something we talk about when we come to Congress. I don't know whether Walmart has ever spoken to Senator BOOZMAN or Senator COTTON, from their home State of Arkansas, about climate change. I know they never spoke to Senator Pryor when he was in the Senate because he told me so. I don't know whether Coca-Cola has ever spoken about climate change to Senators ISAKSON or PERDUE from Coca-Cola's home State of Georgia.

It is not just them. I pick out Walmart and Coca-Cola because they are two of the best companies on carbon reduction. I actually don't know of one major American corporation that makes climate change a priority when it comes here to Washington and lobbies Congress, not one.

America's corporate leaders have great carbon reduction policies, but when they come to Congress, that is not on the agenda of their politics. If it were, it would make a difference. I know it is not easy. Senior corporate leaders in major American companies have told me and others that they fear retribution if they lobby Congress on climate change; that they will be punished on tax or trade or liability or regulatory or other issues they have in Congress.

That is how ugly and rough the fossil fuel lobby plays around here. But there is an answer: group up. The fossil fuel industry and its allies in Congress cannot punish everyone. They cannot punish Coke and Pepsi and Walmart and Target and VF Corporation and Nike and Apple and Google and Ford and GM and Mars and Nestle and Unilever. They cannot punish them all.

So, please, I ask our corporate leaders: Make an agreement with one another that you will not abandon your climate principles when you come to Congress. If good corporations will not speak up, the only corporate force lobbying and politicking Congress on climate change is the fossil fuel industry. You will get exactly what you have now: a Congress in which Members fear to take action on climate because they

know one side, the fossil fuel boys, will punish them. They do not know any other side that will help them.

So the first part of corporate climate responsibility 2.0 is: Do not abandon hope all ye who enter here. Do not check your principles at the door. A second part of corporate climate responsibility 2.0 would be to stand by your principles with those who advocate for you. The best corporate citizens push their good climate policies out beyond their corporate walls into their supply chains. They insist that their suppliers comply with those climate principles. They will not do business with suppliers that do not abide by their climate principles.

So it would be consistent to push their good climate policies out into their advocacy organizations, too, and insist that their advocates comply with those same climate principles, just like their suppliers must.

They ought not to do business with advocacy groups that will not abide by their climate principles. What am I talking about? I have described how good Coca-Cola has been on climate issues. It is terrific on climate issues. Coca-Cola and its bottlers are also important vital members of the American Beverage Association, which sits on the board of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which is one of the worst climate denial organizations and which is a persistent obstacle to any responsible action on carbon emissions.

Similarly, Verizon, 3M, and Ford, all with good climate policies, all sit on the board of this organization with opposite policies. If they would not put up with it from their suppliers, if their suppliers flouted their principles, why put up with it from a corporate mouthpiece they support but that flouts their principles?

If corporate climate change policies are important enough to push beyond the corporate walls and into the supply chain, they should be important enough to push beyond the corporate walls and into the corporation's advocacy organizations. It does not make sense for corporations to speak out of one side of their mouths on climate change and then contradict themselves, through their corporate mouthpieces, their advocacy organizations.

Some do not. Nike resigned from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce board of directors over the chamber's horrible climate policies. Apple left the chamber altogether. So have big electric utilities such as Exelon and PG&E and so have many local chambers of commerce. Google left the American Legislative Exchange Council, known as ALEC. When Google left ALEC last year because of that group's bad climate position, Google CEO Eric Schmidt said of the group: "They are literally lying" about climate change. You do not need to support an organization that is "literally lying" about climate change—not under corporate climate responsibility 2.0. It is not necessary to have your own trade associa-

tion or legislative organization arguing against you.

The same should be true of opinion outlets. For decades, the Wall Street Journal editorial page has been an important and respected voice of the business community. But now on climate change, the Wall Street Journal editorial page never reflects the views on climate change of most of America's corporate leaders, only its fossil fuel corporate leaders.

That page has become exclusively the voice of the fossil fuel industry, and of their climate denial front organizations. In fact, in some ways we could say the Wall Street Journal editorial page has actually become a climate denial front organization. The fossil fuel companies have co-opted the Wall Street Journal editorial page. Where is the objection from American corporations, big well-known American corporations that have spent millions and millions of dollars addressing their carbon emissions, that have spent enormous corporate effort, all the way up to the CEO level, dedicated to a carbon solution and that have developed great policies on climate change? Why be silent when the voice of the business community is saying the exact opposite of what you have worked so hard for and care so much about?

Under corporate climate responsibility 2.0, companies such as that could stand up for their own well-established climate principles and against the opposition to their own corporate principles from the Wall Street Journal editorial page. I feel we are so close to getting something done, something big done on climate change. Our corporate sector has shown so much leadership. The great American corporate leadership on climate change aligns exactly with what America's science leadership is also saying.

The great American corporate leadership on climate change aligns exactly with what America's military and national security leaders are also saying. The great American corporate leadership on climate change aligns exactly with what so many of our religious leaders are saying all the way up to Pope Francis. Of course, American corporate leadership on climate change aligns with what Americans, the customers of these corporations, want and expect.

So let's take it up a step. Let's ask our corporate leaders to step it up to corporate climate responsibility 2.0 and take their existing good policies and line them up with their politics, take what they demand of their suppliers and demand the same of their advocates. That would be a big way for America's corporate leaders to help this body wake up.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### REMEMBERING SAM SMITH

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the life of Sam Smith from Las Vegas, NV. Mr. Smith passed away last month.

Mr. Smith was a retired firefighter and the founder of the bookstore and treasured community establishment, Native Son. Native Son operated in West Las Vegas for 17 years, and throughout that time Mr. Smith was its heart and soul. Mr. Smith offered free math and reading classes and helped many students prepare for fire department entrance exams. He had a saying, "People who study calculus don't go to jail." Mr. Smith cared about the people in his community, and he worked to improve their lives.

Mr. Smith helped people like Trina Jiles become the first Black woman in the Clark County Fire Department. When she came into Native Son in 1995 he told her there were no Black women firefighters and asked how many push-ups she could do. When she did 20, he told her she would be all right and began teaching her in his free math and reading classes. Soon after, she passed all of her tests and became Clark County's first Black female firefighter. She went on to work her way up the department to become an arson investigator.

Through his years of service, Sam Smith was a fixture in the West Las Vegas community. I appreciate all he has done, and I celebrate his life.

#### CONSERVING LA MOSQUITIA

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to briefly draw the Senate's attention to a recent announcement made by Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernández concerning his government's efforts to secure and preserve a newly discovered archaeological site in the eastern part of his country. The area is part of La Mosquitia, a large swath of tropical rain forest along the Mosquito Coast in eastern Honduras, which also extends into northeastern Nicaragua.

Reaching the remote forest is accomplished primarily by air or water, and it was airborne sensing technology in 2012 that first uncovered the ancient site, now revealed to be as much as 1,000 years old. The site is believed by some to be the location of the mythic White City, a safe haven where indigenous populations took refuge from Spanish conquistadores. However, archaeologists Christopher Fisher of Colorado State University and Oscar Neil Cruz of the Honduran Institute of Anthropology and History and ethno-botanist Mark Plotkin of the Amazon Conservation Team who reached the site earlier this month believe the dis-

covery could be even more significant as just one of many sites that may reveal an entire lost civilization.

La Mosquitia is also the home of the Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve, a World Heritage Site that has twice been placed on UNESCO's world heritage in danger list, most recently in 2011. The designation was the result of an investigation that revealed rampant deforestation, primarily by cattle herders seeking to meet the demand for beef in the United States, in addition to illegal hunting and fishing. Perhaps one of the most significant aspects of the Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve's designation is that it is representative of the threats to all of La Mosquitia.

That is why President Hernández's announcement is so important. La Mosquitia is not just a treasure of the Honduran people; it has preserved centuries of cultural artifacts and is now home to a multitude of plant and animal life that has remained largely undisturbed by the outside world.

President Hernández's commitment to preserve these archeological sites from looters and other criminal activity and to protect the broader forest area by replanting the jungle and countering deforestation deserves our support. I look forward to working with the Government of Honduras on how the United States may be able to assist its conservation efforts.

#### NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a copy of my remarks at the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

##### NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

We're here today to review the president's fiscal year 2016 budget request for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the independent federal agency responsible for regulating the safety of our nation's commercial nuclear power plants and other nuclear materials.

This is the first time in many years that the subcommittee has held a hearing to examine the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's budget.

It is also the first of several hearings that the subcommittee will hold this year on nuclear power. These hearings are important because nuclear power provides about 20 percent of our nation's electricity and more than 60 percent of our carbon-free electricity.

I plan to focus my questions today on four main areas:

1. Licensing nuclear waste repositories;
2. Avoiding excessive regulations;
3. Licensing for new and existing reactors; and
4. Making sure the agency is running effectively

First, we must solve the 25-year-old stalemate about what to do with used fuel from our nuclear reactors to ensure that nuclear power has a strong future in this country.

Later this year, I will reintroduce bipartisan legislation with Senators Feinstein,

Murkowski and perhaps others, to create both temporary and permanent storage sites for nuclear waste. Also, Senator Feinstein and I plan to include a pilot program for nuclear waste storage in the Energy and Water appropriations bill, as we have for the past three years.

The new sites we'd seek to establish through the legislation Senator Feinstein and I are reintroducing this year would not take the place of Yucca Mountain—we have more than enough waste to fill Yucca Mountain to its legal capacity—but rather would complement it.

This legislation is consistent with the president's Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future.

But let me be clear: Yucca Mountain can and should be part of the solution. Federal law designates Yucca Mountain as the nation's repository for used nuclear fuel.

The Nuclear Waste Fund, which is money that utilities have paid the government to dispose of their used nuclear fuel, has a balance of about \$36 billion and there are still several steps to go in the licensing process for Yucca Mountain.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has a balance of unspent funding that you are supposed to use to continue the licensing process. But more resources will be required, so I think it's fair to ask the question:

Knowing that there are additional steps and they will cost money, why would you not request additional funds in your budget?

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission recently completed the Safety Evaluation Report that said Yucca Mountain met all of the safety requirements through "the period of geologic stability."

The commission and the Environmental Protection Agency define the "period of geologic stability" as one million years. To continue to oppose Yucca Mountain because of radiation concerns is to ignore science—as well as the law.

The next steps on Yucca Mountain include completing a supplemental environmental impact statement and restarting the hearings before the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, which were suspended in September 2011.

Money is available for these activities, and I want to hear why there is no request to use it.

Federal law requires that nuclear power plants be built safely, but the law doesn't say it should be so hard and expensive to build and operate reactors that you can't do it.

A 2013 report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies found that up to 25 of our 99 nuclear reactors could close by 2020.

The decision to close a reactor could be due to a number of factors, including the low price of natural gas, and the wasteful wind production tax credit, which is so generous that in some markets wind producers can literally give their electricity away and still make a profit.

But the decision to close a reactor can also have to do with excessive and unnecessary regulations. I want to work with the commission to address this.

Over the next several decades, most of our 99 nuclear reactors will go through the commission's license renewal process to extend their licenses, which is critical to the future of nuclear power. I want to make sure that the commission is prepared for this additional work.

I also want to make sure the commission has devoted the appropriate resources to the licensing process to keep new reactors—like Watts Bar 2 in Tennessee—on time and on budget.

I have proposed that we build 100 new reactors, which may seem excessive, but not if